



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
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**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR  
*KE KIA'ĀINA*

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
*KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO*

**KENNETH S. FINK, M.D., MGA, MPH**  
DIRECTOR  
*KA LUNA HO'OKELE*

**FINDINGS FROM DOH BIRD FLU SURVEY FOR BACKYARD FLOCK  
OWNERS AND BIRD RESCUERS**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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HONOLULU — A survey by the Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) finds that while most local residents are aware that the bird flu had been detected in Hawai'i, roughly two-thirds of flock owners had been unaware of related best practices.

In March 2025, the Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) invited Hawai'i residents who keep backyard flocks or are involved in bird rescue to participate in a survey aimed at gathering important data on bird flu awareness and preparedness.

The anonymous, online survey collected information on the understanding of bird flu, as well as the practices and needs of those who keep poultry or care for rescued birds.

Among the findings:

- About two-thirds of backyard flock owners across the state reported they were not at all familiar with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's [Defend the Flock](#) recommended practices to prevent bird flu.
- Two-thirds of survey respondents also reported not knowing how to properly and safely remove and dispose of dead birds.
- Most respondents (84%) were aware that bird flu had been detected in Hawai'i, and of the H5N1 variant that causes the flu.
- Most respondents (72%) said they were very or somewhat concerned about the bird flu.
- The top source of health information for the majority (76%) of Hawai'i residents is their doctor, which they ranked as very or somewhat trustworthy.

To be eligible to participate, individuals needed to be Hawai'i residents aged 18 years or older who keep at least one poultry bird at home, were involved in bird rescue activities, or have had direct contact with birds in the past year for other reasons.

In total, there were 420 survey responses. Of the 420 total responses, 237 respondents met the survey eligibility criteria and completed the survey entirely. Respondents participated from five islands in the state of Hawai'i: 43% from Hawai'i Island, 35% from O'ahu, 10% from Kaua'i, 10% from Maui, and 2% from Moloka'i.

The report of DOH Bird Flu Survey findings is published on the DOH website, along with more information on bird flu: [https://health.hawaii.gov/docd/disease\\_listing/avian-influenza/](https://health.hawaii.gov/docd/disease_listing/avian-influenza/). Additional information can be found at the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity's [avian flu website](#).

The H5N1 bird flu virus has been circulating worldwide, causing outbreaks in poultry and dairy cows in the U.S. A limited number of human cases have occurred in 2024 and 2025. Bird flu is very contagious among birds and can cause severe illness among poultry, other animals and humans. At this time, the risk to the general public in Hawai'i and the rest of the U.S. remains low.

In terms of bird flu preparedness, DOH's priorities include understanding Hawai'i residents' awareness and needs around bird flu (through the DOH Bird Flu Survey), conducting disease surveillance by analyzing wastewater treatment plant samples collected across all counties, and having regular meetings with federal, state and local work partners to stay up to date on disease detections and public health guidelines.

For questions about the DOH Bird Flu Survey, please contact the DOH Disease Outbreak Control Division, Flu Surveillance Team at [doh.flu.surveillance@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:doh.flu.surveillance@doh.hawaii.gov).

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#### **Media Contact:**

Adam LeFebvre

Information Specialist

Hawai'i State Department of Health

Phone: 808-586-4439

Email: [adam.lefebvre@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:adam.lefebvre@doh.hawaii.gov)